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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

MAJOR TOPIC NO. III

PERSONNEL ASPECTS OF FIRE MANAGEMENT



Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin
February 8, 1954

F (RF)
SUPERVISION
Meetings
(Fire Control Conference, 1954)

MAJOR TOPIC NO. III

"Personnel Aspects of Fire Management"

Sub-Topic A

"Fire Training"

by

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GENERAL

Some of the comments by Regions and Stations on the topic "Personnel Aspects of Fire Management and Fire Training":

(Cal.) The Personnel Aspects of Fire Management is one of the most important topics on the agenda - is a Service-wide problem much broader than Fire Control alone.

(R-1) If fire control can be substantially improved by more effective or stepped-up training, there is little doubt that it would buy more at less cost than any other thing that could be done.

We all too frequently fail to make the best use of accepted procedures, tested methods, and available information in handling our fire job.

With our organization undermanned and under-financed, better training of available personnel to handle more work effectively becomes increasingly important.

(NRM) Fire training is one of the most important aspects of fire control preparedness, and in many cases can spell the difference between success and failure in the fire control job.

(R-4) Fires cannot be effectively controlled with ill-trained and poorly equipped men.

(PNW) Our large losses and suppression costs are due to a relatively few fires that become unusually large, which emphasizes the need for additional training in suppression and large fire organization.

(R-3) There is need for establishment and adherence to Service-wide standard training requirements for all personnel having anything to do with fire control.

(R-9) More and better training of each individual in the fire organization appears to be the key to keeping the skill and efficiency of our personnel fully in pace with advanced knowledge in fire behavior and improved equipment and methods.

(NE) What is the proper emphasis that should be given to fire control and training?

(R-5) Should re-emphasis be given Service-wide to fire control as the first priority and challenging job for each man, regardless of functional assignment?

Should our sub-professional fire jobs be made more attractive by offering more security and more opportunities for (career) advancement so as to create or maintain a strong interest and a desire for improvement?

(So.) Should we take a leaf from the Armed Services' book and offer incentive extra pay to employees for meeting minimum requirements in experience and training, which results in attainment of special qualifications such as a full-fledged Fire Boss, Sector Boss, Dispatcher, Fire-Flow Operator, etc. comparable to the Armed Services' extra pay to aviators, pointers, trainers, submariners, etc.

(Cal.) What is it essential for people at different levels in the organization to know and be able to do in order to carry out all component parts of the fire control job effectively?

(R-2) With Ranger Districts averaging 4.5 fires and 40 acres burned per year, it is difficult to maintain an aggressive fire organization through fire training and inspection.

(R-8) If out of this meeting comes only one result, a clarification and agreement on which kinds of fire training pay off the best, who gets it, and how much, and plan is set up to give it, the meeting will have been a success.

We all recognize that the amount of time and money that should be spent on training and inspection will vary between forests and regions, and from one year to another, depending upon the individual situations.

Training programs must give emphasis to the particular needs where information, training and experience are lacking by the men in those fields where they are expected to perform. In order for training to be most productive and cost-worthy it must be based on analysis of needs in each situation.

It is also the general consensus that training in large fire organization, fire fighting techniques, and fire behavior must be emphasized. But training programs must include all essential phases of prevention, suppression, trespass investigation and law enforcement, and damage appraisal as well as suppression.

Now, what are the best kinds, methods and techniques of training to meet particular local problems? How can the essential training be given with the least sacrifice of other work? Who gives it, and who gets it, and how much? That seems to be the subject for discussion. Can this meeting agree on the minimum amount of training each person should receive?

It seems clear that a stepped-up Fire Training program is generally considered advisable.

I will present for consideration what appears to be the minimum requirements in Fire training that should be put into effect. Another look five years hence may then indicate need for changes.

There is a place for differences in minimum standards between Regions with basically different situations. This is provided for in the minimum training program proposed. The frequency of training meetings, within the limits provided, and the intensity and time requirements for each session is for regional determination based on analysis of their individual needs.

SUBJECT 1. Training of Trainers

(R-1) Training of trainers is very important. We need to step up this program, aiming at eventual complete coverage of trainers.

(R-5) Training is an inseparable part of supervisory responsibility - not a job for specialists separated from the job. Supervisors should

learn sound techniques of instruction applicable in the job situations as well as in group sessions. It will enable them to do a better job of training and supervising, and strengthen their leadership ability.

(NE) Fire training is more effective if given by local supervisory personnel than if given by "professional" trainers. The local supervisory personnel should be trained by trainers so as to become skilled in training.

(R-2) We have a big job ahead of us to be sure that everyone giving training utilizes the best techniques in getting across the functions of the fire guard and of fire control.

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It seems to be generally agreed that we should provide for special training of trainers. The following schools are proposed:-

A. Regional Training Schools for Trainers. Every 3 - 5 years.

Conducted by - training specialists.

Attended by - most R.O. field-going personnel,
Forest Supervisors and Forest Training Officers.

B. Forest Training Schools for Trainers. Every 3 - 5 years.

Conducted by - Forest Supervisor or Forest Training Officer.

Attended by - All S.O. staffmen, rangers, assistant rangers or
fire control assistants.

These special training courses in sound techniques of fire training will usually be held not more often than every 3 to 5 years. In most cases they could be combined with training schools for fire managers.

(R-4) The Service should publish and keep current a "Trainer Guide" outlining principles of training and containing general outlines and other guide material. There is need for putting together the training aids developed and making determination of other opportunities and needs for developing aids in priority order. Devices are needed for emphasizing and dramatizing the effects of fire behavior through use of films. A training film devoted to the techniques of training, a training program for Fire Safety Officers, etc. should be developed. There should be a full exchange between Regions currently of new training outlines, training guides and improved methods.

2. Training Fire Managers

It is generally agreed that training schools in fire generalship and other high phases of the fire job are essential.

(R-5) It is essential that supervisors or managers arrive at a common understanding and acceptance of objectives and standards, operating rules, basic organization guides, concepts of operating practices, and also of the known factors of fire behavior and fire weather and their relation to each other.

There is some divergence of opinion as to who should receive this high-level training. Also there is a question if the central "War College" idea should be followed for giving instruction of a very high-level nature to a few men carefully selected from each region on the basis of their general competence, long successful fire performance and outstanding personal characteristics.

(R-1) Should training in fire generalship be aimed at qualifying most or all district rangers, or should it be on a more selective basis with the view of having a few competent key personnel to move in on the ranger to take charge of fire situations when needed.

(R-6) The district ranger on whose district the project fire occurs is the logical person to fire boss the fire. Therefore, it becomes important to qualify him for the fire boss job.

(R-2) Each district ranger should have sufficient training and experience to enable him to handle a fire as fire boss with some guidance from the Supervisor or staff.

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It appears that Regional training schools for fire managers are generally favored over a central school in the belief that on this basis the dollars spent will purchase more effective training. Also, that the Regional schools should be followed by Forest schools with the view of qualifying all rangers and others on the Forest possessing the proper characteristics for the fire boss job and other high-level positions.

The following training schools for fire managers are proposed:

A. Regional Training Schools for Managers - every 3 - 5 years.

Conducted by - Fire Specialists, NFA and Research

Attended by - RO inspectors, supervisors, some selected S.O. staffmen and rangers, and fire research men. Also State Fire Chiefs, other agencies' representatives, and in some instances representatives of forestry schools and industry.

The exchange of views of a high-level nature with State representatives and other interested Bureaus and Agencies, forestry schools and industry is very desirable in some instances. Part of the value of such training sessions is creating good will and morale, which is very important.

Emphasis should be varied for each training session, depending upon the currently most obvious and pressing needs. Certain fundamentals, however, such as planning for large fires, fire behavior and fire fighting techniques, should be repeated each time as a refresher. Frequent refresher training is important.

B. Special Regional Training Sessions:- From time to time a special regional meeting may be desirable such as:

- (a) Joint Federal and State field maneuver simulating a project fire.
- (b) Joint Federal and State fire equipment field demonstration, sponsored by the Regional Fire Equipment Committee, in which industry is encouraged to display and demonstrate its wares.
- (c) Special Fire Prevention and Law Enforcement Schools.

These special sessions might substitute for the regular "Fire Manager" training schools or be scheduled as additional meetings depending upon the local need and urgency.

Some regions can (and do) take advantage of another region's training school by sending representatives for training. (R-2 had selected men attend schools for law enforcement and for fire bosses in an adjacent region).

(SE) Where on-the-line training and experience is limited, because of a dearth of large fires, as is the case in many places, training maneuvers simulating a project fire should be conducted. (Have R-7 describe the procedures and methodology used in training session sponsored by the N.E. Compact States.)

Training fire managers and other top-flight officers at the Forest level:

(R-6) The ultimate pay-off is the training of the forest personnel at suitable locations on the forest. The work load demand, other than fire fighting, requires the full time of every member. Therefore, any time devoted to overhead training must be done at the expense of other important work. The fact that the sacrifice may never "pay off" (because of intermittent occurrence of project fires) is a consideration in deciding the amount of time that should reasonably be devoted to this type of training.

(R-9) Many failures, big and small, on the fire line have stemmed from the unanticipated - the unexpected or lack of sensitivity to all probabilities. More and better training in fire behavior may avoid some of the failures made.

(NRM) Training in fire behavior to all line overhead personnel is one of our greatest needs.

(SW) Have more fire researchers participate in more fire training sessions to provide a means of ready interchange of knowledge and problems - the fire managers learn what researchers know about the problems, and the researchers learn first-hand what answers are needed to pressing problems.

C. Forest Training Schools for Fire Managers - every 2 - 3 years.

Conducted by - Supervisor or Forest Training Officer, assisted by RO and Research men.

Attended by - All S.O. staffmen, District Rangers, Assistant Rangers and Fire Control Assistants.

These men to be trained in fire generalship and in the other high phases of the fire job which they are expected to perform in accordance with the forests' large-fire organization plan. It is particularly important that

Fire Bosses and Line officers be given training in fire behavior, including the technical and scientific aspects.

These sessions might normally be held in conjunction with the Annual Rangers' Meetings.

Part of these sessions should include, when possible, reviews of large fires.

(a) Special Joint Meetings Some of the Forests' sessions, at least one every five years, should be joint meetings with comparable local State men and officials of other interested Federal Agencies. Also, some selected key cooperators might well be invited to attend. Then special joint sessions should as a rule include field trials and maneuvers.

3. General Fire Training Schools

A. Forest Training Schools - every 2-3 years.

Conducted by - The Forest training officer, assisted by district rangers, S.O. staff and Research men.

Attended by: All yearlong, field-going employees, both administrative and Research.

Purpose - to firmly establish the fundamentals of forest fire fighting, to keep them fully informed of new developments and knowledge, and to prepare each regular member of the forest fire control team to perform effectively his particular function.

These meetings are broken up as needed into different experience age groups.

Special short training courses for technically trained foresters in the technical and scientific aspects of fire behavior, and other specialized training given to selected groups.

Fire reviews should be made currently on all large fires with all forest personnel in the higher overhead positions taking part in the "autopsy or post mortem".

The new men should first attend the District "Guard" school.

B. District "Guard" Training Schools - every 1-2 years.

Conducted by: Ranger and his staff. (Assisted at times by S.O. staff)

Attended by: All seasonal employees, fire wardens, and timber operators and other key cooperators.

Purpose: Through field and class room instruction, teach each member how he fits into the large fire organization, how to organize and supervise workers, choice of best attack method, the capabilities and limits of equipment as properly used, and the purpose and necessity for standards of performance and adherence to instructions on safety (including lines of retreat), etc.

Emphasis is usually placed on actual field work and demonstrations, rather than class room training, teaching them how to do things and why, and making them appreciate their responsibilities for the particular job assigned as a member of a team.

An important part of training at the District level is on-the-job training. Each member of work crews, presuppression standby crews and suppression crews should be trained to execute his assigned job efficiently as a member of a fire team. Equipment operators must "get the feel" and learn by practice the capabilities and limits of their machines. New forest officers should first be assigned as a hand worker, then as a straw boss, etc. as they learn and develop. Essentially as important as original training is refresher training.

The non-use of knowledge or skill gained requires more refresher training and practice.

(R-2) With a small force and limited finances insufficient to operate formal training camps, the training work must be accomplished by on-the-job training and inspection.

(CS) In many places in the Central States, the main problem is to find the ways and means to enlarge the force of capable cooperators trained in the proper technique of fighting fire and mopping up so they can take over and handle sections of the fire line with little supervision and how to give them enough employment on small fires to raise their experience level and maintain their effectiveness. This is especially important since there is seldom enough overhead to give adequate on-the-job training when the big fire emergency is at hand, and inexperienced men without adequate supervision are often a handicap instead of a help.

(R-8) Each future forest officer must actually perform and learn the various basic jobs to competence. In that manner he develops some first-hand knowledge of the nature and behavior of fire under various influences. He learns what men can do and cannot do; how to get effective production from men; develops a sense of relative values of various possible tactics and the cost of not providing for or doing certain things. Until a man develops "know-how" to the point of self-confidence, he will not have the degree of aggressiveness, quick decision and willingness to back his judgment so essential to effectively directing fire fighters.

(R-6) Planned training should be a part of and integrated into Boards of Fire Review, controlled burning work assignments on project fires, and fire line inspections.

Inter-regional and Inter-forest Training assignments:-

In addition to the formal training sessions, the local Fire Reviews, and on-the-job training, every opportunity should be taken to assign men to project fires who otherwise would not likely be exposed to that type of experience.

(PNW) Utilize opportunities to the fullest possible extent for on-the-line training and practice in big fire organization, management, strategy and tactics when big fires do occur, and give the training to men who will most likely make use of it before they forget what they once knew.

Recognition of differences in probable fire behavior and choice of the best suppression strategy and tactics is still far from a science that can be (adequately) described in texts and taught in training. (Experience is the best teacher.)

(R-1) Interregional training and work details partially serve the purpose of discriminating good practices between regions.

(R-2) Forest staffmen, assistant rangers and fire control aids should be sent to project fires strictly for training purposes. Inexperienced men should be assigned to overhead positions in company with experienced men.

(R-6) A real problem is to maintain an adequate level of fire-fighting experience particularly among the ranger district personnel who do most of the fire fighting and are commonly used to fill the fire-fighting overhead positions.

4. A career program for selected individuals. The general consensus seems to be that we should not aim at a special career program in fire control. This will be covered in Subtopic C.

5. Fire Control courses in forestry schools.

There is a general feeling that the forestry schools are going a reasonably satisfactory job, but that they could and would do more in this field if material was made available on the techniques, methods and organization for an adequate fire control program. The schools probably should give more emphasis to fire control in their forestry curricula.

We have a job of extending more cooperation to forestry schools in teaching fire control courses, and of providing material for advanced courses we would like to have them teach - such as fire behavior and weather factors. We also have a job of selling fire control as a difficult and complex part of forestry generally and that it must be so considered by professional foresters.

6. The need for joining the NFA and Research in training and extension work.

There is no question that cooperation between the two branches should be continued and expanded, and that enlargement of the extension work now being accomplished is desirable.

The fire research program should be joined or tied in closely with NFA resource management work, including silvical studies.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED
MINIMUM FIRE TRAINING

I. REGIONAL TRAINING SESSIONS:

1. Training Trainers - Hold in conjunction with 2.
2. Training Fire Managers - Every 3-5 years
3. Special Training Meetings - Substitute for 2, or additional every 5 years.
 - a. Fire Prevention and Law Enforcement
 - b. Fire Equipment Demonstrations
 - c. Joint "Project Fire" Field Manuvers

II. FOREST TRAINING SESSIONS:

1. Training Trainers - Hold in conjunction with 2.
2. Training Fire Managers - Every 2-3 years (usually combine with Ranger Meeting).
3. Special Joint Meetings - Substitute for 2 once every 5 years.
4. General Fire Training Schools - Every 2-3 years.

III. DISTRICT "GUARD" TRAINING SCHOOLS

1. Training seasonal Guards & Cooperators - every 1-2 years.

IV. On-the-line Assignments for training - as opportunity affords
On-the-job training - currently

The minimum Fire Training Program would require attendance at meetings about as follows: (Length of each meeting will vary). Is this too much?

<u>Individuals</u>	<u>Average Minimum</u>		
Rangers	10	Meetings in	5 years, or 1 in 0.5 years
Ass't. Rangers & F.C. Assistants	9	" "	5 years, or 1 in 0.6 years
Forest staffmen	7	" "	5 years, or 1 in 0.7 years
Supervisors & Fire Researchers	6	" "	5 years, or 1 in 0.8 years
R-O Staff, & Yearlong aids	2	" "	5 years, or 1 in 2.5 years
Seasonal Guards & Key Cooperators	3	" "	5 years, or 1 in 1.7 years

Inspections by Forest Personnel

Fire inspections of a ranger district by a member of the supervisor's staff are an evaluation of doing jobs. With more and more of the supervisor's time directed towards other phases of our work here is a most important training and supervision job. Here is the ranger's trainer and the supervisor's eyes. Are these staff men being given training in inspection techniques? Do they know how to inspect - are they preparing for inspections, do they develop guides to follow, do they know training is an integral part of inspection, do they mutually work out the problems encountered?

My observations indicate that training of many staff men in good inspection techniques is on a hit or miss basis depending primarily on the supervisor's wishes and that quality of inspections must be improved. To do this, regional attention must be directed toward giving these men the proper training. Can it be done by special regional training courses or should the supervisors be requested to give increased emphasis to training their staffmen? Is it the supervisor's problem? Should inspection frequency standards be critically reviewed?

As a part of the training the staffmen could be directed to develop sample district training guides for correlation by the region.

Inspections by Regional Personnel

As a general rule regional inspections are an evaluation of management. However, the same objectives apply and the same major phases must be followed. Do they - are they? How can regional inspections contribute to better inspection on the districts and forests.

Recommendations

To assist in solving the problem of better inspection it is recommended that:

- (1) The regional training program be expanded to include specific training on inspection techniques. This should include written training instructions on inspection.
- (2) The existing manual and training instructions be reviewed and revised to bring them up-to-date and provide the following guides for use on a ranger district.
 - (a) Guard handbooks (instructions for firemen, lookouts, and crew leaders). Most regions have these instructions but when were they last reviewed and revised? Do they portray today's jobs and are they simple and readable?
 - (b) Self inspection outlines - keyed to the guard handbook - for lookouts, firemen, crew foremen, and ranger alternates.

- (c) Inspection guides for use by rangers and ranger alternates.
- (3) A concentrated drive to raise the quality of inspections at all levels be conducted in all regions.
- (4) A real effort be made to eliminate superficial inspections.

F
SUPERVISION
Meetings
(Fire Control Conference 1954)

MAJOR TOPIC NO. III PERSONNEL ASPECTS OF FIRE MANAGEMENT

Subtopic B - INSPECTION

By: Boyd L. Rasmussen, Assistant Chief, Division of Fire Control, W. O.

The regions and stations replies to the Chief's Circular indicate a wide variance as to what should be included in the topic of inspection. The recommendations varied from an increased number of inspections to increased intensity of inspection of various phases of fire control work such as suppression action, fire danger ratings, expenditures, etc. Two regions expressed the belief that the fundamentals should receive additional emphasis on the ranger district and forest level. One station emphasized the training value of inspections. All of these are good suggestions. What they are pointing at is: THE QUALITY OF OUR INSPECTIONS MUST BE IMPROVED. It is my conviction that inspection at the ranger district and forest levels has lagged during the past few years and that steps must be taken to improve it. While this paper will emphasize inspections on the ranger district and forest, the objectives and elements of an inspection apply equally well for all inspections.

All of us should know how to conduct a good inspection. Does the field going man know what constitutes a good inspection? What is being done to make sure they know how? A periodic review of just what an inspection means should be conducted in all areas.

On the intangible side inspections afford an opportunity for the advancement of thinking and a broadening of horizons for all participants. They offer an opportunity to show good work, to orient thinking, and to accept new ideas. They provide a media for evaluation of personnel. They help define the proper use of latitudes, provide stimulation and furnish leadership. They must be helpful.

The word inspection brings to mind many pictures to different people. Webster defines the word inspect as: "to look upon, to view closely and critically, especially so as to ascertain quality or state, to detect errors." For inspection he says: "the act or process of inspecting, a strict or prying examination." While this is the book meaning it does not cover the broad Forest Service meaning.

The philosophy of Forest Service inspections can best be expressed by a look at the basic objectives of those inspections. For Fire Control inspections they are:

- (1) To determine and evaluate the manner in which the Fire Control activity is being handled, and whether it is being correlated with other resource management activities.

(Over)

- (2) To mutually determine the cause and course of action to be taken to correct any deficiencies found.
- (3) To determine whether controlling policies, plans, standards, etc., are reasonably adequate or whether additional ones are needed and whether they are being used.
- (4) To determine the qualifications of the man being inspected in relation to the fire job.
- (5) To give the man being inspected training in fire control work and to determine his future training needs.
- (6) To give commendation and recognition for work well done.
- (7) To give both the inspector and inspectee a broader perspective and enable each to better meet his job responsibilities.

From the objectives it also can be seen that training is an integral part of any inspection and a part which the inspector must constantly keep in mind as the inspection progresses. With training always in the background the four major elements of an inspection are:

- (1) Preparation - This phase includes a study of the applicable policies and standards, a review of background material including previous inspections, and the development of procedures and guides to be used in conducting the inspection. The preparatory work is as important in the conduct of a good inspection as salt is to eating. Are we doing this phase of inspection work at all levels? It is just as important in the ranger as the regional forester's office. If we are not doing it, why aren't we? Is it lack of time, are we lazy, or don't we recognize its importance?
- (2) Inspection - This is the field job, the on-the-ground review and is divided into four parts.
 - (a) Orientation - This should cover a discussion of the purpose of the inspection, what is to be seen and the travel time table. This presents a good opportunity for the inspectee to present some of the major problems of the unit.
 - (b) Review of progress resulting from previous inspections - What is the status or progress made in bringing up to standard previously discussed deficiencies?
 - (c) Fact finding - This is a review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the work of the unit.

- (d) And finally a joint review of the facts found by the inspector with the inspectee and as far as possible the development of joint conclusions. This is the team approach to solving the problems and working out mutually agreeable conclusions and a course of action to be followed.
- (3) Report - This is the factual record of what was seen and discussed on the inspection trip. It should be submitted as promptly as possible and contain commendation for good work, recommendations for correction of substandard work, an evaluation of the progress made on problems cited in previous inspections and conclusions and evaluation of the overall job. A good inspection report is constructive and helpful.
- (4) Followup - This is a much neglected part of inspection work without which most inspections fall flat. This is the checkup to determine progress being made in correcting deficiencies or doing jobs planned for execution.

Inspections by Ranger District Personnel

Basically we reach the "hard core" of fire inspection on the ranger district. Where supervision, inspection, and training are all tied closely together and where emphasis shifts rapidly from one to the other. Here it is determined whether the lookout will discover a fire immediately, and locate it correctly, whether the initial action crews are ready and trained to do an effective job within the allowable time, whether the fire tools are sharp and ready to go, whether the machinery available will work and can be effectively operated, whether reserves are available, and whether fire starting agencies such as refuse burners, sawmills, resorts, etc., are meeting the fire requirements necessary to prevent the starting of fires. Here is where good inspection (it must be called inspection training) can be made to pay tremendous dividends and it can mean the difference between getting a fire and losing it. Are we reaching the man who is doing the work? Have we provided him with the tools needed to do his job or have we assumed he knew?

First let's take a look at the guard or lookout. There are some who have been with us for years but the majority are with us only a season or two. Usually we conduct a guard training program for these employees with followup training by one of the ranger's assistants. In getting the most effective work from these employees are we making full use of self inspection outlines and simple prepared study courses? Have we fully explored this field?

Now let's take a look at the ranger alternate or district assistant who is doing the inspection-training and supervision for the ranger. Who is he? Mainly, we think of him as a man with little formal education but with much "know how" and usually years of experience. But has he? Lately with woods work paying high dividends these men have become few and far between. What

we have is a man who has been a good lookout, or a district clerk, or has served a few years on one of the crews but who certainly is not the old timer in whom we placed so much confidence.

What are we doing to give this man an understanding of his inspection-training job? He must know how to orient and train a lookout or guard, how to check the fire readiness of a smokechaser, how to train and check fire crews, how to inspect tool caches, how to inspect sawmills, woods operations, etc. His is a doing and training job. We cannot hope to give him a background like the old timer, but we can and must help him if fires are to be discovered promptly and extinguished quickly. He must be given: (1) an understanding of how to do it, to give him confidence and willingness (2) he must be taught how to simply report what he sees, and (3) how to take positive action to correct deficiencies. Are we doing this job and is it getting the attention it needs? Have we provided this man with such tools as inspection guides, simple study courses, and self-inspections?

The district ranger must be a supervisor, a trainer and an inspector. His inspection work is a close combination of training and inspection and it is difficult to see where one ends and the other begins. The ranger's fire inspection job consists of the following:

- (1) Training assistants to do the inspection-training and supervision job. While these men participate in some group training the major training job falls on the district ranger. Usually this is done by making an inspection with the assistant and showing him what is wanted, by discussions, and by written work lists. The ranger should provide this man with inspection guides or outlines but is this being done?
- (2) Followup inspection to sample how the assistant is doing.
- (3) Correction of any deficiencies by followup training.

This is an important phase of the ranger's work but it can become rather slip shod. How can the ranger do this job with other high priority jobs constantly needing doing? How can the ranger best back up and stimulate his ranger alternate? How can he concentrate in training: how to do it, how to report and how to correct?

The Ranger may have the know how to do this job but under today's volume of work he certainly does not have time to prepare these aids. They could be prepared in the supervisor's office but since the same guides would apply to most ranger districts in a region it is a regional job. It is believed that much of the difficulty could be solved by proper training directed from the regional level. Certainly if men know how, they will do a better job. Therefore, to assist in solving the problem of better inspection at the ranger district level it is recommended that:

- (1) The regional training program be expanded to include specific training on inspection techniques. This should include written training instructions on inspection.
- (2) The existing manual and training instructions be reviewed and revised to bring them up-to-date and provide the following guides for use on a ranger district.
 - (a) Guard handbooks (instructions for firemen, lookouts, and crew leaders). Most regions have these instructions but when were they last reviewed and revised? Do they portray today's jobs and are they simple and readable?
 - (b) Self inspection outlines - keyed to the guard handbook - for lookouts, firemen, crew foremen, and ranger alternates.
 - (c) Inspection guides for use by rangers and ranger alternates.

Inspections by Forest Personnel

3. Concentrated drive to elevate quality of inspection
4. Eliminate superficial inspections

Fire inspections of a ranger district by a member of the supervisor's staff are an evaluation of doing jobs. With more and more of the supervisor's time directed towards other phases of our work here is a most important training and supervision job. Here is the ranger's trainer and the supervisor's eyes. Are these staff men being given training in inspection techniques? Do they know how to inspect - are they preparing for inspections, do they develop guides to follow, do they know training is an integral part of inspection, do they mutually work out the problems encountered?

My observations indicate that training of many staff men in good inspection techniques is on a hit or miss basis depending primarily on the supervisor's wishes and that quality of inspections must be improved. To do this, regional attention must be directed toward giving these men the proper training. Can it be done by special regional training courses or should the supervisors be requested to give increased emphasis to training their staffmen? Is it the supervisor's problem? Should inspection frequency standards be critically reviewed?

As a part of the training the staff men could be directed to develop sample district training guides for correlation by the region.

Inspections by Regional Personnel

As a general rule regional inspections are an evaluation of management. However, the same objectives apply and the same major phases must be followed. Do they - are they? How can regional inspections contribute to better inspection on the districts and forests.

Fire inspections as they relate to resource management

To keep on top of the fire problem from the ranger, supervisor, and regional level the fire faucet of every activity must be carefully considered. The exact effect of different activities on the fire job must be studied and foreseen in advance. The following is a partial list of what must be reviewed as a part of a fire inspection:

- (1) Are fire plans designed to take care of the hazard created by timber cutting on a full scale? Is the disposal work keeping up?
- (2) Are special uses such as ~~powerlines~~ and railroads being correlated with the needs of fire control?
- (3) Are recreation layouts located in areas where an escaped fire would be difficult to control? Are new areas being considered only in locations relatively safe from fire? Is fire control being considered in other recreation use?
- (4) Is wildlife being handled in correlation with fire control? Are hunting seasons scheduled to avoid bad fire weather?
- (5) Are fire plans adjusted to conform to changes in types of use?

Are inspectors taking these and other items into account? Is fire control being given full consideration by other activities? Is a job of correlation needed?

Denver, January 29, 1954

MAJOR TOPIC NO. III

Sub-Topic C

"Careers in Fire Management"

by

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Prior to preparing this paper, opportunity was had to review written comments on the subject, which comments had been submitted by most of the stations and regions. Two of the memorandums indicated definite feeling that a career in fire management could not be an attractive one - in fact, should be considered a precarious one insofar as tenure is concerned; that bad luck, poor judgment, faulty organization or lack of resources are penalized far more severely (career-wise) in fire control than in any other Forest Service field of activity. Based on my own observations during nearly thirty years in Government service, I cannot subscribe to the above-expressed feeling, nor have I heard of a specific instance which would lend support to the feeling expressed in the two comments mentioned. No doubt the men who prepared the comments knew of specific instances which justified their feelings, and obviously it is not a matter which can be settled as a result of generalized discussion. We all have probably heard of early year reports of severe personnel penalties having been meted out as a result of fires "breaking loose," etc. Possibly some injustices were done - I don't know - but if all facts are considered at the time of Board of Review action on individual fires, there should be little chance of arriving at an unjust decision. Certainly, we need all of the facts before deciding on a penalty to be leveled in the event of personnel failure. Included in the facts, we need to know how thoroughly the man was trained, how certain his superior officers were of his ability when he was appointed in the position, what followup they have subsequently taken to assure that his judgment and organizing ability are such that the probability of his making a serious mistake is minimized to a satisfactory level, and what steps were taken to give him needed experience. These principles or questions should be applied in investigation of any personnel failure, whether it be failure in proper handling of timber sales, range use, lands problems or examples of misconduct. If they are applied, I can see no reason for one activity being considered more precarious than another, insofar as tenure or career factors are concerned.

Going into the subject of careers -- a large majority of the region-station comments do not favor setting up separate career ladders for fire personnel in the professional grades. Several regions point out that their fire occurrence problem does not justify a separate ladder - others that such a ladder would be costly - that such a ladder would narrow down in the higher grades so that but few advancement opportunities would exist. One of the heavier fire regions feels that the anxiety, worry and physical drain on personnel in fire control work tends to shorten the useful service life of employees assigned to fire work, and that, after spending a major part of their Service career in the highly-specialized field, they don't find other avenues in which to turn for continued employment.

Considerable emphasis is placed by various men on recognition that fire activities are closely related to and integrated with other activities carried on by administrative officers, and express strong belief that no action should be taken which might adversely alter the situation.

Some favor was expressed for using a limited number of highly-trained fire experts but generally the thinking as reflected in the comments considered the specialists' advancement as not limited to the fire control field but rather that they be considered for advancement in administration where they would continue to use their fire control abilities and aptitudes. It is understood that most forest supervisors in the heavier "fire" regions did serve in fire staff or other key fire positions prior to attaining their positions as supervisors.

The California Station favors a "nucleus of professional fire technicians in the Service - men who have the time, capacity and incentive to learn and apply all the known technical aspects of fire control." It seems that this suggestion is worthy of careful consideration - especially in the light of using the men principally in the field of training - and in some instances in staff advisory capacity on project fires. The proposal may tie in also with the recognition of urgent need for more fire research, and to the advisability of arranging more interchange of personnel between administration and research.

Consensus in several regions strongly favors career ladder opportunities in subprofessional groups. There is strong feeling in some regions that recent years have brought about serious decline in the effectiveness of fire organizations on many National Forests. One region states that "Quality of the fire organization has deteriorated to a serious degree." Another region cites a serious decline in the quality of a considerable percent of its fire personnel. Other regions are faced with the same problem in varying degrees.

Principal concern expressed deals with those portions of the fire organizations which are made up of subprofessional personnel. By and large, these folks form the core of basic protection organizations on the National Forests and the importance of having well-trained and experienced men in the subprofessional positions cannot be over-emphasized. These men usually spearhead the all-important initial attack on fires, and much of our success in controlling fires at the smallest possible size is dependent on the skill, intelligence, stability and stamina of these men in the subprofessional grades.

Last winter Region 5 made a study of its fire organization and personnel problem. The region recognized the necessity of having well-trained and skilled men in the subprofessional positions and considered that on the average an acceptable level of skill is not attained in less than three seasons. The study disclosed an extremely serious turnover situation on all forests. On one forest the study shows only 10% of the men in subprofessional fire positions as having had three seasons or more experience; 77% with less than one season. The region's efforts to replenish the ranks with potentially good men has failed, and it has become increasingly necessary to fill positions with inexperienced men of questionable quality.

Region 3 reports a similar problem - of rapid turnover of subprofessional fire personnel and of its inability to employ qualified personnel. Principal reasons for the turnover problem existing in these and other regions are as follows:

1. Competition for workers, by industry and other public agencies
2. Relatively low salaries
3. Our past inability to offer uninterrupted and career employment
4. Inadequate housing available in many instances

The problem and reasons for the problem are not new. They have become greatly intensified in recent years as a result of expanding industry, general increase of wage and salary levels, stepping up of welfare and employee benefits of various kinds on the part of industry and for other reasons.

Solution of the problem is not easy. Some suggestions are:

1. That present standards for subprofessional fire positions be studied by classification and administrative officers to determine correct position grades, giving full consideration to comparative degrees of responsibility as between fire and other functional positions.
2. That the career ladder in subprofessional positions be extended to provide for a ceiling of GS-8. (Present ceiling is considered GS-7.)
3. That every consideration be given to provide yearlong employment to these subprofessional fire personnel. In some instances organizational changes may be feasible to provide for resource, construction and maintenance work being done by fire subprofessionals during "off-season" periods, as well as during low-hazard days in the fire season. This points to yearlong all-purpose crews, rather than to individual functional crews. It, of course, results in fewer men composing the crews, but would provide yearlong employment for the men instead of only seasonal employment as under the functional crew plan. Usability of this proposal will, of course, vary with conditions existing on individual forests and districts.
4. While we cannot compete favorably with industry in providing adequate housing in many locations, we should use every means at our disposal to improve the situation. Use of portable buildings, house trailers and other facilities should be encouraged and provided as funds become available.
5. Step up use of off-fire-season details for these men. Possibilities may be present in regional shops (sign, woodworking, blacksmith, automotive repair); on timber surveys - on construction and maintenance work - on other types of surveys. Some may have ability for timber survey and other compilation work. The five suggestions listed are not intended to solve the entire problem but may help. It is hoped that discussion during this meeting will bring out additional suggestions.

Comments from the regions and stations reflected generally strong opposition to departmentalizing the fire function. In lieu of setting up a separate fire organization, recommendations include (1) that strong emphasis be given to stepping up intensive fire training of personnel; (2) broader use of intra- and inter-regional fire training details, with careful use of experience-developmental rosters; and (3) that all regions emphasize fire control ability as basic requirement for men to fill ranger and supervisor jobs.

Some of the specific objections made to departmentalizing are briefed as follows:

1. Results in the placing of fire specialists at various administrative levels, who would be more or less responsible to and take directions from the fire specialists in the next higher level; would result in some degree of short-circuiting of present line officers.
2. Overlooks or disregards the organizational philosophy upon which much of the strength and past success of the Forest Service is based.
3. Throws out of balance the proven arrangement of line positions - Chief, Regional Forester, Forest Supervisor, Ranger - each at his level with responsibility and

authority for attaining proper emphasis on and integration between the varied activities or functions which combine to bring about balanced management.

4. Increase cost.

5. Would prevent close integration of fire prevention, presuppression and suppression activities with other functions and duties of administrative officers. (Integration problems tie in to broad educational job, employment, use of local labor, use of fire as management tool.)

The subject of safety, while not included in the agenda for the meeting, is one that I want to briefly mention - briefly, not because of its lack of importance, but because of limited time.

Industry has proven that safe practices result in stepped-up production, improved morale, lessened turnover, more security and happiness to employee and family, decreased cost of production. Those same benefits - and others - result as we improve our safety practices.

In the aggregate the Service employs several thousand men in handling fires on the National Forests. This places a tremendous responsibility on men in supervisory capacities - and I'm not thinking of responsibility for money expended, acres burned, chains of line constructed - I'm thinking of responsibility for those thousands of men and to their families. We simply can't afford to slight the safety of those fire workers.

In all of our fire organizing, planning and suppression actions, let's remember those familiar two words - Safety First - and let's double-underline the word "First."

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SUMMARY

Fire Training

(Proposed Minimum Requirements)

1. Training of Trainers. Supervisory personnel trained in sound techniques of instruction applicable in job situations and in group sessions to enable them to do a better job of training and supervising, and strengthen their leadership ability. (Fire training by local supervisory personnel is more effective than if given by "professional" trainers.)
 - A. Regional Training Schools - every 3-5 years.

By: RO (and WO) training specialists.

For: RO inspectors, forest supervisors and forest fire control officers.
 - B. Forest Training Schools - every 3-5 years (follow-up on regional schools)

By: Forest supervisor and forest fire officer.

For: All SO staffmen, rangers, assistant rangers and fire control assistants.

(These training schools usually combined with training schools for fire managers.)
2. Training Fire Managers. Training in fire generalship and other high phases of the fire job with the view of qualifying all rangers and other personnel possessing proper qualifications for the fire boss job and other high-level positions. Fundamentals such as planning for large fires, fire behavior and fire fighting techniques stressed.
 - A. Regional Training Schools for Fire Managers - every 3-5 years

By: RO and Research fire specialists.

For: RO inspectors, forest supervisors, fire research men, and some selected SO staffmen and rangers. Also State and other agency representatives, and in some instances members forestry schools and industry.
 - A-1. Special Regional Fire Sessions - Substitute for A, or in addition, at least every 5 years.
 - (a) Joint Federal and State field maneuver,
 - or (b) Joint Federal and State fire equipment demonstration meeting,
 - or (c) Special fire prevention and law enforcement schools.

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B. Forest Training Schools for Fire Managers - every 2-3 years.

By: Supervisor and fire officer, assisted by Research and RO.

For: All SO staffmen, rangers, assistant rangers and fire control assistants.

(These forest sessions normally held in conjunction with annual rangers' meetings.)

B-1. Special Joint Sessions with State men and others - at least every 5 years.

3. General Fire Training Schools.

A. Forest Fire Training Schools - every 2-3 years.

By: Forest fire officer, assisted by SO staff, rangers and Research,

For: All yearlong, field-going employees - administrative and Research.

Purpose: To firmly establish the fundamentals of forest fire fighting, to keep them fully informed of new developments and knowledge, and to prepare each regular member of the forest fire control team to perform effectively his particular function; and to serve as a refresher.

Special short courses to selected groups, such as the technical and scientific aspects of fire behavior as affected by weather for new foresters. (New men should first attend the district "Guard school")

B. District Guard Training Schools - every 1-2 years.

By: Ranger and his staff.

For: All seasonal employees, fire wardens, and timber operators and other key cooperators.

Purpose: "Down-to-earth" type of field and class-room instruction that makes the men appreciate what their responsibilities are, both to their job and to each other in the organization, how to organize and supervise workers, choice of best attack method, the capabilities and limits of equipment as properly used, and the purpose and necessity for standards of performance and adherence to instructions on safety (including lines of retreat), etc.

4. On-the-job Training. Currently as needed to become, or keep, efficient in job assigned.

5. Inter-regional and Inter-forest Fire Assignments. In addition to formal training sessions, fire reviews and on-the-job training, every opportunity should be taken to detail men in need of experience to project fires for on-the-line training.

PROPOSED

(Exclusive Fire Board Reviews and on-the-job training)

Minimum Fire Training

Training Sessions	Frequency (How Often)	Who Gives	Who Gets
I. <u>Regional Training Sessions:</u>			
1. Training trainers	(3-5 yrs. in conjunction with #2)	RO (&WO) Training specialists	RO Staff Super. & For Fire Officer
2. Training Fire Managers	<u>Every 3-5 years</u>	RO & Research Fire Specialists	RO staff, Fire Res. Super. & Fire Officers Sel. SO staff & Rangers
3. Special Training Meetings:- a. Fire Prev. & Law Enforcement b. Fire Equip. Field Demonstration c. Joint "Project Fire" Field Maneuvers	Substitute for, or in addition to #2, every 5 years.	<u>Same</u> , plus other RO, Research & State Specialists	Same, plus state & other representatives
II. <u>Forest Training Sessions:</u>			
1. Training Trainers	(3-5 yrs) in conjunction with #2	For. Supervisor & " Fire Officer	SO Staff, Rangers, Ass't. R. & FC Assts.
2. Training Fire Managers	<u>Every 2-3 years</u> (Usually part of Rangers Meeting)	Super. For. Fire Officer, Assist by RO & Research	(Same)
3. Special Joint Meetings	Substitute for #2, once every 5 years	Same plus State Men	Same plus State Men
4. General Fire Training Schools	<u>Every 2-3 years</u>	For. Fire Off. ass't. Research, SO staff & Rangers	All yearlong Admin. & Research men.
III. <u>District "Guard" Training Schools</u>			
1. Training Seasonal Guards & Coop.	Every 1-2 years	Ranger and his ass't. R. & FC ass't.	All seasonal men, wardens & key coop.
IV <u>On-The-Job Training</u>	currently	All supervisory personnel	Their subordinates Operators and crew members
(On-the-line training)		Home Trainer and Receiving Forest	Those most needing Training & experience
V <u>Project Fire Assignments</u>	as opportunity affords		

This program would require attendance at training sessions about as follows:-

Forest Fire Officer & District Rangers -	average 7 to 8 Sessions in 5 years
Assistant Rangers & F.C. Assistants -	6 " in 5 years
Forest Supervisor & S.O. Staffmen -	5 " in 5 years
Other yearlong Adm. & Research & R.O. staff -	2 " in 5 years
Seasonal employees & cooperators -	3 " in 5 years